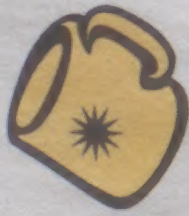




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THE WORD

Wrestling with Ted Turner

What exactly is it that celebrities have to offer us? Do they make our lives better in any way? Are they equipped to take an influential stance? The answer is no. Celebrity is created the same way a plot is created for a Stephen King novel, it is a formula. Should Britney Spears be the thing to which young girls aspire? Definitely not!

I was discussing this very subject with Ted Turner the other day while getting ready for our weekly bout of Greco-Roman wrestling and he said that the best thing about owning so many media outlets is that he doesn't need to report the news, he creates the news. When I asked him what he meant, he rammed his knee into my back and told me that celebrity is like the news because it's created by people you never see, it's never questioned by a louder voice than its own and everyone has become accustomed to just sitting there and taking it all in. At this point, I elbowed Ted Turner in the ribs and manoeuvred myself onto his back, pulling his arms behind his head. I asked him why it was necessary to do all this just to make people pay attention. I asked him if there were not enough real news items and enough talented people in the world that others were willing to pay money to hear and watch, while pulling back even harder on his arms.

His breathing was laboured now due to the searing pain, but he managed to tell me that the news waits for no man and it's not news until he says it's news. Thousands of noteworthy events go on in the world every day, he told me. Over 2.5 million people have been killed in the Congo

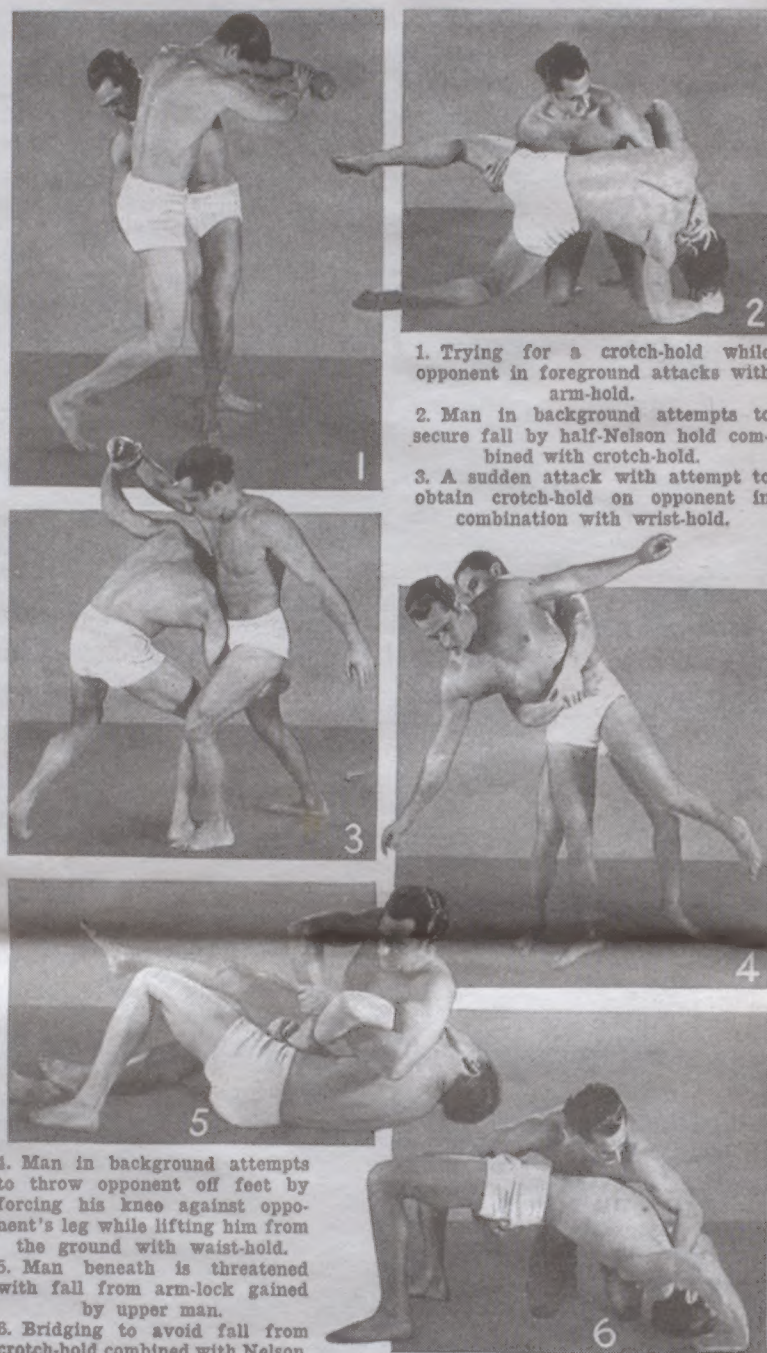
since 1998, but our leading story is about J-Lo and Ben Affleck breaking up on the day of their wedding or Big Arnold telling California voters that "he'll be back."

I was so distracted by this declaration that Ted managed to hop to his knees and drive my shoulder blades into the mat by doing a move usually only seen in swimming competitions. I was heavily winded, so my first few sentences were not loud enough to be heard. After a minute, I asked Ted if there was any good reason that George W. Bush was the leader of the free world and whether Big Arnold was really going to be the next governor of California. There was a long silence. If Ted didn't have his hand around my throat, I would have thought he had left in bewilderment. Ted helped me to my feet, brushed some of the wrestling chalk off of my shoulders and looked me right in the eye. He said in a calm, yet mildly condescending voice: "The thing people don't know about George W is that he's a hell of a golfer and he can pound back more than 20 shots of Kentucky Bourbon without throwing up. Arnold, well, everyone's just scared to hell of Arnold. Look at the guy, he can bench-press his Hummer."

I walked Ted to his jet and he gave me a punch in the solar plexus for luck. I returned the favour with a heavy slam to the ribs, also for luck. "Same time next week Warren?" he said walking away in a hunch. "You bet Ted," I returned while looking for the closest available chair.

I hope that sharing this conversation will help others with their misconceptions about the media. Thanks Ted.

- Warren Bjarnason



USUAL SUSPECTS:

The Word (Pg. 2 & 3)

The Verdict (Pg. 4 & 5)

The Rhubarb (Pg. 6 to 8)

Scuttlebutt (Pg. 9 to 12)

SubVerses (Pg. 13)

Fibre, Facts & Fallacies (14 & 15)

Vendor Republic (Pg. 16 & 17)

Soothsayer Sandy (Pg. 18)

Editorials

Reviews

Op/Ed

Politics & Social Issues

Poetry, Prose & the Arts

Rants & Ruminations

News on Vendors

Monthly Horoscope

< Oct. features >

Book of Days: This Month in History



October 2

Lady Bessborough to Lord Granville, 1805.

My whole day has been taken up by a horrible adventure. I found a little boy almost naked, crying bitterly and nursing a baby in his arms; he told me his Mammy was dying and had nobody to help her. I asked where she was; he

got up and led the way to a miserable house, so miserable that I drew back unwilling to go in. The child held my gown, and looking up piteously, said, 'Won't you come?' in such a tone, that I reproached myself for my fine Ladyship in doubting, and forced myself to go on. Indeed, dear G., I could not have imagined a human being reduced to so much wretchedness; in a miserable hole on a rug on the stones lay a creature almost naked, almost a skeleton, distorted, hideous and disgusting to the most frightful degree, so helpless that her arms, face and bosom were covered with flies, which seemed devouring her and which she had not strength to drive from her. She was groaning terribly, and to all appearance in the last agonies of death. I was so overcome, so shocked, that my head swam. I tottered against the door and for fear of fainting was moving out of the room, when in a hollow voice and rolling her great eyes towards me, she said: 'Have mercy upon me.' I cannot tell you how I felt, my heart sank so within me. I went up to her and tried with my handkerchief to drive the flies away. She said several things I could not hear, but

at last I heard she told me, 'I am a great sinner - pray for my poor soul.' I knelt down almost mechanically and prayed fervently (scarcely knowing what I did) for her and for myself, for I thought it presumption for me to pray for anyone. She thanked me and said I was the only person that had pitied her. As soon as I got out, after charging the woman of the house to take care of her, I went to the apothecary's (but this house is next to a public house, and the noise of singing and drunkenness almost mixes with the groans of this poor dying creature). The man whom I made go with me came out almost as shocked as I was, but told me a dreadful story. He knew the woman; he saw her five years ago - young, very pretty, and a decent kind of woman. She married a soldier who got drunk, beat and abandoned her, since when she gave herself up to every kind of vice; in short, her disorder is the consequence of her way of life. His expression to me was horrible, but, in short, that every part of her, inside and out, was decayed, and for this last fortnight it seems she had been completely neglected.

October 12

Sergeant Gowing, of the Royal Fusiliers, writes to his parents during the Crimean War, 1854.

On the 25th inst [i.e., in or of the present month] they attacked our position at Balaclava. Our cavalry got at them - it was a grand sight, in particular the charge of the Heavy Brigade, for they went at them more like madmen than anything that I can explain; the Greys and Inniskillings (one a Scotch and the other an Irish regiment) went at them first, and they did it manfully. They rode right through them, as if they'd been a lot of old women, it was a most exciting scene. I hear that the Light Cavalry have been cut to pieces, particularly the 11th Hussars and the 17th Lancers. The rumour in camp is that someone has been blundering, and that the Light Cavalry charge was all a mistake; the truth will come out some day.

WORD W

WORD: Faculty of speech; locution, talk, parlance, verbal intercourse, prolation [archaic], oral communication, word of mouth, parole, palaver, prattle.

ROGET'S THESAURUS



MUSIC

Music is your own experience, your own thoughts, your wisdom. If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn.

They teach you there's a boundary line to music. But, man, there's no boundary line to art.

-Charlie Parker

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V

VERDICT

Decision, determination, finding, **verdict**, sentence, decree; opinion (belief); good judgment (wisdom)

ROGET'S THESAURUS

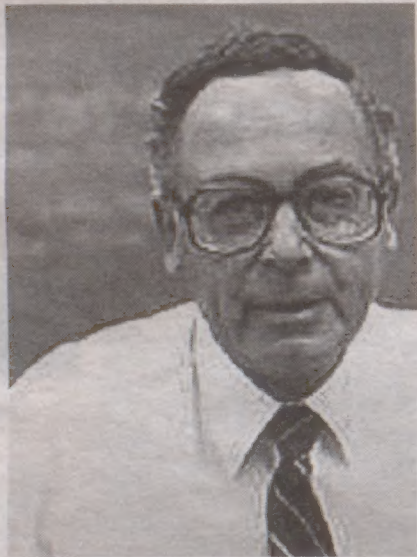


Civilization is drugs, alcohol, engines of war, prostitution, machines and machine slaves, low wages, bad food, bad taste, prisons, reformatories, lunatic asylums, divorce, perversion, brutal sports, suicides, infanticide, cinema, quackery, demagoguery, strikes, lockouts, revolutions, putsches, colonization, electric chairs, guillotines, sabotage, floods, famine, disease, gangsters, money barons, horse racing, fashion shows, poodle dogs, chow dogs, Siamese cats, condoms, pessaries, syphilis, gonorrhea, insanity, neuroses, etc., etc.

-Henry Miller

THE VERDICT

On Film Capturing the Friedmans



Oh, what a piece of work is a family, how blind in reason, how infinite in fantasies, in reform and removing, how express and formidable, in action howlike criminals, in retribution how like a god.

The documentary, *Capturing the Friedmans*, makes one's mind race. When we emerged into the jarring banality of the theatre's foyer, the projectionist sat waiting, calm as an oracle and with the certitude of a headline. He can't remember, he tells us, the last time audiences were so eager to talk about a movie. He, kindly, was a sounding board for the majority of solo goers longing to discuss it and a spontaneous forum began. After many viewings, his summation was unhesitating "everyone is lying".

The genre of *Capturing the Friedmans*

could be "mystery" as there are victims, villains, clues and testimonials. But all motivations are maddeningly suspect because 1) the Friedmans live in Crazy Town and 2) the Sex Crimes Unit's fervor to nab them resembled Salem. But let's begin at the beginning.

Arnold Friedman, husband and father of three sons, is a respected teacher in the upscale community of Long Neck, NY. He is busted for buying and exchanging child pornography. Now that Arnold's a known pedophile, the police begin to scrutinize his life. Where does the Pideophile Piper lure his prey? Arnold teaches an after school computer class to children in his home (aha!) and all his pupils are interrogated. Here begins the descent into the maelstrom. Shocking accusations come forward, not only the offenses themselves but an alleged volume that is staggering. Several times, the questioned children name 17-year-old Jesse, the youngest Friedman son, as an accomplice. Now father and son shield their eyes together against the blistering spotlight. But the spotlight is the natural habitat of the Friedmans. Much footage in this brilliant and seamless documentary is from the Friedman's own home movies. Even when public humiliation and scandal invade their house to stay, the camera never stops rolling.

David, the eldest, is the most campaigning of the sons (Seth, the middle child, declined being interviewed for the film). His unwavering, prolix (slightly shrill) certainty that his father did NOTHING untoward with his pupils can be a bit rich. To quote Thomas Hardy, "the more emphatic the renunciation, the less absolute its character". David, the number one birthday clown in New York, has an energetic, almost childlike loyalty that can be heart-wrenching and a tad manic. We're allowed to watch his very personal video diaries wherein he sobs, swears and laments his family's pending diaspora. Offering up intimate family anguish and rancor for public consumption is an unend-

ing head-scratcher here.

Where is the mother in all of this? Elaine Friedman could be a documentary herself: her coping, her denial, and her endurance of what seems to be endless contempt from her sons. Although Arnold comes to his wife's defense at times, his approval of the set alliances is obvious. She is not so sure of his innocence; therefore, she is the enemy and must be discredited and silenced. She waffles between a vague naïveté about what Arnold's child porn is for (saying her husband is artistic and would "meditate" on the images, oh dear) to giving him the new pet name of "slime". Who wouldn't be devastated, though, to find out their husband has a pervy penchant for little boys? Not good, whole life a lie and all that. Elaine's far from saintly but she's in a tough place. What irony that she would bear him three beautiful sons. There's some footage of the three boys wrestling on a sofa, one (I think it's the very beautiful Seth) is shirtless. The tan, lean, exquisite torso of the boy holds a chilling dimension in the context of that home. It's hard to think that Arnold was not tempted to "meditate" on his sons. Elaine spoke of Arnold's particular delight with Jesse as a baby and he was a serious cutie; a blue eyed, chubby cherub, sparkly, adorable, pure as the driven snow. I suppose Arnold was once the same ... I feel a haiku coming on.

Questions helplessly form: why the manic defensiveness about their father's innocence; he owned child porn, might he not have "acted out"? Why all the filming and audiotaping during such a ghastly time? Is it to convince the world of their decency? Is it to dissociate/distance themselves from a sexually sick household and create another reality? Then, Peter Panaro, Jesse's lawyer, discloses shocking yet highly plausible information, but is it true? Jesse must have given him permission to speak and Panaro also comments on a disturbing conversation with Arnold, not his client. Here again, the motivation could be suspect:

is Panaro defending himself about his courtroom strategy? Jesse completely denies what Panaro says, yet went along with it 13 years ago, hunched and weeping before the judge, hoping for a lighter sentence. Will the lying never stop? Actually, no, there's more.

You live by the lie, you die by the lie; enter "the community". With the unflappable Frances Gallasso at the helm of the Sex Crimes Unit, there's a disconcerting sense of "guilty until proven really disgustingly guilty". The investigation's credibility is damaged by the unreal number of alleged assaults. It's frankly impossible that so much violent group buggery and coercion could have transpired over that time period. One investigator admits to "a dearth of physical evidence": no blood, stained clothing or physical examinations. Also, Gallasso painted a picture of kiddie porn in stacks all over the house yet the pictures taken on the first search don't verify this. One community member spoke of an almost competitive edge the parents' developed about their assaulted children ("Your child was sodomized 5 times, well mine was sodomized 6!"). He and his son were pressured to change their story when they said nothing happened in the Friedman house. He was told he was in denial. The only former student who affirmed the alleged atrocities was, frankly, a weirdo. Lounging back sensuously, decapitated by darkness to shield his identity, he recalled bizarre group assaults (naked leap frog was one) with a creepy delight. He's probably a sex addict hoping victimhood will mitigate his sliminess. Anyway, he enjoyed himself too much to be taken seriously.

Wow, I'm out of space, I could continue. Bottom line: this documentary is fascinating. Arnold Friedman was guilty of certain things and maybe it was, karmically speaking, time to pay up. You decide, it's all you can do, you'll never really know.

-Keyna Laurence

AMERICAN COOL THE KIDS HAIR VALUE
 IMAGE ME? MOLD ME
 FUTURE ME
 PLEASURE
 SELL
 OUR
 NEED
 PLEASE
 MED
 MARK
 TAKE
 FAUX-LESBIAN INTIMACY
 GIMMICKS ME
 DO YOU FEEL
 SOMETHING
 TREND ONE
 REAL
 DEAL

IF YOU WANT TO SING OUT
 AND YOU WANT TO BE FREE
 AS ALL THINGS MUST SHOUT AND TELL OF ME
 SURELY HALVES ONE JUST NOT ME, AND IT'S NOT I
 TO END ALL GREAT HAVE JUST TELL, IT'S MEANT FOR THIS WORLD
 LOVES WILL DAY PARTS I KNOW THAT I AM MEANT FOR THIS & THE SILENT WORLD

ERIC WELCH

- Columbia Encyclopedia

THE RHUBARB

Internet Outrage

R RHUBARB



I want a dish to taste good, rather than to have been seethed in pig's milk and served wrapped in a rhubarb leaf with grated thistle root.

KINGSLEY AMIS

It is a well-known fact that parents are not aware of what their children are doing on the Internet and less than 1/3 of these parents are actively protecting their children by using filtering or blocking software. The tragedy is that in North America approximately 24 million children are now online. When we include teens, the number goes up to 45 million.

Some chilling facts: One out of five has been solicited for sex in the last year. It is estimated that 725,000 have been "aggressively" asked for sex. Further, one in four children was sent pictures of people who were naked or having sex. Much of this occurs in chat rooms and nearly 2/3 of children frequent chat rooms. Many chat rooms are run by pedophiles and predators and other such people.

Alarmingly, 75% of children will share personal information about themselves willingly over the Internet. Online predators will contact 77% of youths by the age of 14 and 22% of children ages 10 to 13 will be approached. Clearly, this is a critical situation. What can be done? Education is the only workable answer.

Who can help? Everyone who is involved with children and youth in almost any capacity can pass the message to them. It is the responsibility of everyone to protect our children from harm.

Send representatives from your organization to gain significant insight into the magnitude of the problem and to discover how to help to solve the problem.

Complete the attached Registration Form and fax it back to us at (780) 669-0056 to reserve your seat(s) at the CyberAngels Workshop on October 16, 2003 at the Shaw Conference Centre in Edmonton. Seating is limited.

The agenda for the workshop is also attached and features Internet experts, Alberta's Special Prosecutor, new government regulations and, of course, the CyberAngels.

We, at Tech Expo, are proud to be able to offer this opportunity to Albertans who have an interest in our children and who are prepared to do something about it.

For more information call us at (780) 432-7874 or email at info@techexpo.ca and visit our web site at www.techexpo.ca. The CyberAngels web site is linked to ours.

Arm yourself on October 16, 2003 and take that step in fighting the menace of Internet crime and, above all, fight to protect our children.

-CyberAngels



Knocking off the Monkey

As a young girl, I went to a residential school in Ontario. I came from a very dysfunctional family with alcoholism playing a big factor. I never felt the bonds of love and tried to raise myself. I made numerous mistakes in my life. One such mistake was becoming addicted to alcohol at a young age. I also took phynormal, a painkiller.

I managed to hold down a day-job and played in a band in different lounges where some of the patrons would buy me drinks. I drank heavier and took more painkillers. At times I forgot to eat, running my immune system down. I was also raising a family, needless to say, I inflicted hurt on them despite the fact that they were completely innocent. Thankfully, I had a really good neighbour who helped me. I functioned with only four hours sleep a night.

There came a time when I felt things were spinning out of control. It affected me physically. I was hit with a very serious stomach ulcer. It was then

I knew I would sink or swim.

I went for counselling and assistance in overcoming my addictions. I made the decision to quit the band and spend more time at home. That was one of the most difficult things I ever did. I really enjoyed playing in the band.

I was extremely lucky that I didn't get fired from my day-job. I received counselling for a long time because I often felt urges to drink again and still wanted to play in the band. The thing which definitively changed my life was Hodgkins lymphoma, which I had twice. I now realize that I am extremely lucky to be alive.

I would encourage anyone out there facing addiction to get counselling as soon as possible. Try to set goals for yourself. Although it may seem difficult, try to think positive, find a counsellor with whom you feel comfortable and don't give up.

-Marie Joki

If an addict who has been completely cured starts smoking again he no longer experiences the discomfort of his first addiction. There exists, therefore, outside alkaloids and habit, a sense for opium, an intangible habit which lives on, despite the recasting of the organism.... The dead drug leaves a ghost behind. At certain hours it haunts the house.

-Jean Cocteau

THE RHUBARB



FURROLOGY

In today's society there is a whole rainbow of sexuality. On www.suburbia.com there are two diverse and interesting subcultures that have existed far before the internet existed, but because of the ease of communication, they have flourished.

One is the furry subculture. A furry can be an animal that has human characteristics or, a human who relates strongly, in whatever way, to the idea of the characters outlined in the previous definition. This may involve anything from a person who simply enjoys viewing furry fanzines or films, to someone who actually desires to be a 'real' furry, or believe that they are literally a non-human trapped within a human form. It can also be a person with an important emotional/spiritual connection with an animal or animals, real, fictional or symbolic – a person with an emotional/spiritual connection with an animal or animals, real, fictional or symbolic.

From this there are groups of furies who have adopted the furry lifestyle. The furry lifestyle is a lifestyle which is informed or influenced markedly by the furriness of the person who leads it. As one furry puts it:

"It's whatever you feel like doing that expresses how you feel. You can purr when happy, you can stalk when angry, you can go into heat at the drop of a bunny. When you consciously choose to act a certain way because of a furry or a furry idea, it's a part of your furry lifestyle."

Some of the more common activities concepts or beliefs which 'lifestyle' furies sometimes include totem animals and spirit guides, theriomorphosis, plushophilia, fursuiting, personal furies, and zoophilia. But this list is incomplete as there are as wide a variety of practices in being a furry as those who practice the lifestyle. People find comfort in this lifestyle because they identify with the sensuality of animals and the camaraderie of those who also choose to pursue this lifestyle.

Because of this, furies have what is known as *furrycons*. Conventions of like-minded individuals who pursue the various aspects of furrydom.

Kind of like a science fiction convention, but instead of dressing like your favourite Star Wars or Star Trek character you dress like a character from a Japanese comic book or a Beatrice Potter.

So you decided to embrace the "Furry lifestyle" and decided to go to a chat room or a con and somebody calls you a plushie. This guide to the furry lingo will help you.

Personal Furry

A personal furry is a furry's image of themselves as a furry. If you prefer, a personal furry is an anthropomorphic animal-persona which a human furry assumes.

For some this furry alter-ego is expressed in role-playing, either on MUCKS, IRC, or in general communication. When someone lapses into third person in e-mail, and sends you something like this: Shinda smiles and snuggles you with her tail you are being treated to a display of affection by a personal furry. Lucky you.

Someone's concept of a furry persona can go a lot deeper than just role-playing. Whereas some furies enjoy slipping 'into character' so to speak, many others consider their personal furies to be permanent attributes; their 'true selves', unhindered by the human physical form they must wear in mundane life. This of course opens doors into spiritual realms involving topics like the transmigration of souls. Subjects like this involve many questions and no unequivocal answers. Sometimes the act of furry alter-egos and role-playing can be a way of developing and strengthening positive qualities and character traits - traits which seem somehow more synonymous with an animal identity than a human one. Perhaps ultimately it is a roundabout way of re-integrating the human soul; of getting back in touch with our own true status as human animals. Just as long as Bob doesn't wear his bunny costume at the water cooler there is nothing wrong with the furry lifestyle.

Theriomorph

Since the beginnings of human society there have been people who have claimed the ability to 'shift' into the form of another animal, either physi-

cally or mentally. The word 'theriomorph,' meaning 'having an animal shape,' has been coined to describe these people. A similar word, 'therianthropy' denotes the ability to change between human and animal forms.

The best-known examples of this in European legend are werewolves (from Germanic roots meaning 'man-wolf.') Though not strictly correct, the term 'were' has been used (werewolf, werecat, werebear) interchangeably with 'theriomorph.' There are many people today who believe they possess this ability. Most only claim to be able to 'shift' mentally, into the mindset of some animal they feel some kind of spiritual tie to; some have also claimed to be able to shift physically, although there has never been any definite proof of this.

Totem Animal

Totemism is a belief system which is traditionally associated with pre-literate societies. Its forms are so varied across the globe that it probably resists a neat or single explanation. Probably the most salient feature however is that of a tribal group associating itself with a particular species of animal, to which clan or tribe members are related by mythical ancestry. In some societies totem animals are associated with ritual, but in North American native culture this is less the case. Some Australian aboriginal societies believe in a one-on-one relationship between a human and his or her personal totem animal. This relationship sometimes involves a transference of magical powers to the human. It is this sort of individual totemism which is popular amongst furies.

The entire subject of totemism is highly personal and individual, and it is probably best not to offer any definitive account of it. Let's just say that plenty of furies either have, or are in search of their totem animal, for spiritual guidance, or just to help cement their furry identity.

Fursuit

Fursuit is another name for an animal costume intended to be as realistic as the maker can achieve, although 'mascot'-style costumes are often included, and some furies have/wear/make both. Some furies like a more 'toonish' type of fursuit. Not a mascot, but something that is as close to some of their favourite toon fantasies as possible. It's rather like trying for realism where the desired goal is an already anthropomorphic character. By putting on a fursuit, you become a furry, as close as you'll get without surgery, anyhow. However not all people in animal costumes are furies. Some just like the look. Some are trying to earn a living being a mascot.

Many furies feel that donning a fursuit helps them move closer to their 'true' furry form, and it's not at all unusual for furies to spend a lot of time in their suits, including sleeping in them. It has been reported by some furies that making love in a fursuit can be... very furry indeed!

Plushies Plushophile

Plushies are stuffed animals. The teddy bear is the original. But there's a plethora of plushie species available. A plushie of a favourite or totem animal species can help a furry feel closer to that species in everyday 'mundane' life. Other furies may just collect plushies

because, let's face it, plushies are cute. More than a few furies have a love of plushies which goes a lot deeper than this, however. A plushophile is a person whose love of plush often extends into sexual, romantic or spiritual realms.

Toonophilia

Toonophilia is a love of cartoon characters. Of course for our purpose we would limit the discussion to furry toonophilia. 'A love of cartoon characters' can mean a tendency to become deeply emotionally involved with a toon, or it can mean a sexual attraction, or both. One of the most celebrated toonophiles is the famed underground artist Robert Crumb, who stunned 'mundane' audiences by admitting to having been sexually attracted to Bugs Bunny - though some might say that the most famous toonophile of all was 'Uncle Walt'. Perhaps the most well-rounded definition of a furry toonophile is a person who regards furry toons with the same range of emotions he or she would bestow on a human.

Zoophilia

Within furrydom, zoophilia simply means a love of animals, and a zoophile is someone who loves animals. It's probably best to apply the same principle we used for toonophiles: a zoophile feels for non-humans in the same way that humans generally feel for each other.

Zoophilia can mean sexual attraction, but one shouldn't assume that is the case if someone tells you 'I'm a zoo'. Many furies are zoos in the non-sexual sense of the word. Some furies are also sexual zoophiles. But you cannot define the whole lifestyle in a few words. There is individual jargon for each of the furry types and sites and books devoted to each type.

Many furies are in hiding because of the strange looks and reactions people give them when told of their lifestyle choice. This article is not meant to mock their lifestyle rather to make people aware of it. In an offshoot of the furry lifestyle there is the *clunkie* lifestyle. They are also diverse and secretive about their lifestyle choice.

In the clunkie lifestyle or as they like to call it c:/ your obsession is with robots. This obsession is in perfect sync with pop culture. Look at *Metropolis* by Fritz Lang. And the success of the terminator running for governor of California. However, the clunkie dresses up in robot costumes to perform sexual acts, or has sex with metallic objects like metal dildos or dolls modified for their fetish tastes. They can have their partners act like robots or just have erotic fantasies like the lead character in *Brazil*. In fact we all have our fantasies its being open with them and tolerant of other viewpoints, as long as they don't harm anyone else.

So on Valentine's Day show some courage in love. Dress like the tin man or the cowardly lion and get off to see the wiz which is a whole different fetish entirely. In other words, the age of Aquarius opened a whole can of worms and you just have to fish with what nature gave you.

- Philip Jagger

RHUBARB R

RHUBARB: A discussion, often heated, in which a difference of opinion is expressed:

Altercation, argument, bicker, clash, contention, controversy, debate, difficulty, disagreement, dispute, fight, polemic, quarrel, run-in, spat, squabble, tiff.

ROGET'S THESAURUS

THE RHUBARB

THE TRANSGENDER BENDER

R RHUBARB

"We stand at the crossroads of gender balanced on the sharp edge of a knife."

What **rhubarb**, senna, or what purgative drug Would scour these English hence?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

While for most of us, gender is something we take for granted, for transgendered individuals life is not that simple. They face multiple barriers, prejudice, and misunderstanding. Susan's Place, a web site of transgender resources, says of the transgendered population: "We stand at the crossroads of gender balanced on the sharp edge of a knife."

When you see a transgendered person on the street, often the first reaction is something strange about that person that warrants a second look. While the majority of transgendered individuals are male to female, there are a number of female to male, but this is less obvious because women often wear men's clothing.

"We should get over the pink and blue from the beginning and just be who we are," said Shawna Hohendorff, program co-ordinator of Kindred House, a drop-in program of the Boyle McCauley Health Centre. It provides a safe drop-in where women and transsexuals who work on the street have a safe place to eat, rest and use the phone.

Hohendorff said the transgendered individuals are particularly misunderstood because there is not a lot of awareness and there are many phobias surrounding them. Being transgendered is different from being homosexual in that a transgendered individual presents himself or herself as the opposite of the gender he or she was declared at birth. A transgendered male presents himself as female and wants to be accepted as and treated as a female, and vice versa, unlike the transvestite, who wears clothing of the opposite sex, while still maintaining his or her gender. Being a transvestite is considered a psychological problem, while being transgendered is a physiological condition because part of it is biological or biochemical. Some male to female transgendered individuals have an extra female chromosome in every cell, being xxy instead of xy as in males. Because of this, treatment, which includes hormone therapy, breast implants and surgery to change the appearance of the genitalia to that of the opposite sex, is covered by health care.

The majority of transgendered individuals in the city are male to female at various stages. Most of the ones on the street haven't been able to access the medical care to receive treatment, but cross-dress, wear wigs, make-up, and present themselves as female. But there are others at



various stages of treatment, which begins with hormone therapy, then breast surgery and is completed by changing the genitalia. For male to female surgery, a vagina opening is created, the penis is slit, the erectile tissue removed, and the skin flap inverted to create the lining of the new vagina, usually about seven inches deep. If the penis is too short, skin grafts are necessary. The urethra is shortened and set in a normal position below the clitoris, which is formed from the glans of the penis so sensation is still possible during sexual intercourse. The testicles are removed and the scrotal skin sacs are converted into outer, giving the appearance of female genitalia.

But for the transgendered individuals who are street-involved, the likelihood of

getting surgery is low because of the difficulty accessing health care. Hepatitis C, HIV and addictions are also barriers.

"In my experience, it is unusual for any of them to receive the treatment they need," said Hohendorff.

In addition to problems accessing health care, they are also more likely to be denied housing or services from other agencies. They are barred from the men's shelters like the Herb Jamieson, and while the Women's Emergency Accommodation Shelter will admit the transgendered person, they are confined to the medical unit or on the staircase rather than placed among the general population. Safe houses like SAFE place that shelter women fleeing from abusive situations will not accept transsexuals unless the change has been

completed. In the prison system, they may be placed in the mental health unit.

Housing is another barrier. On the City of Edmonton's latest homelessness survey, they offered only two options when it came to gender -- male or female. Transgendered individuals had to write-in a third option.

In recognition of the special needs of this small but highly visible minority, 'The Duplex,' a part of the Crossroads Program, opened to provide housing that was inclusive and welcoming to transsexuals. Crossroads has other residential facilities strictly for females, but the Duplex is their largest facility. It is actually comprised of two side-by-side duplexes placed on the site where the Fortress, a well-fortified drug house, once stood. It can house 15 people.

"We looked at the number of transgendered individuals working on the street who had no other place to be accepted. The need was recognized in the homelessness plan," said Kourch Chann, manager of Crossroads. "Our facility is geared towards women involved in prostitution, but male to female are included."

The Duplex provides transitional housing for street-involved people who want to make changes in their lives. A person can stay up to three years. Some leave in a few days, others live at the Duplex for a year or more. Tenants are charged rent once they get to a point where they can pay, and there is no damage-deposit required. They are helped to get to a point where they can get social assistance, student finance, employment or AISH and can move out on their own or into a safe, supportive environment.

Chann estimates that there are about 50 transgendered people involved in prostitution in the inner-city, but it seems like more because they are often highly visible. Because they are a minority group, only about 10 per cent of the people who have lived at The Duplex are transgendered.

"Often cross-gendered individuals are caught in limbo - not a man, not a woman. Having a safe place to explore their sexuality is important," said Chann.

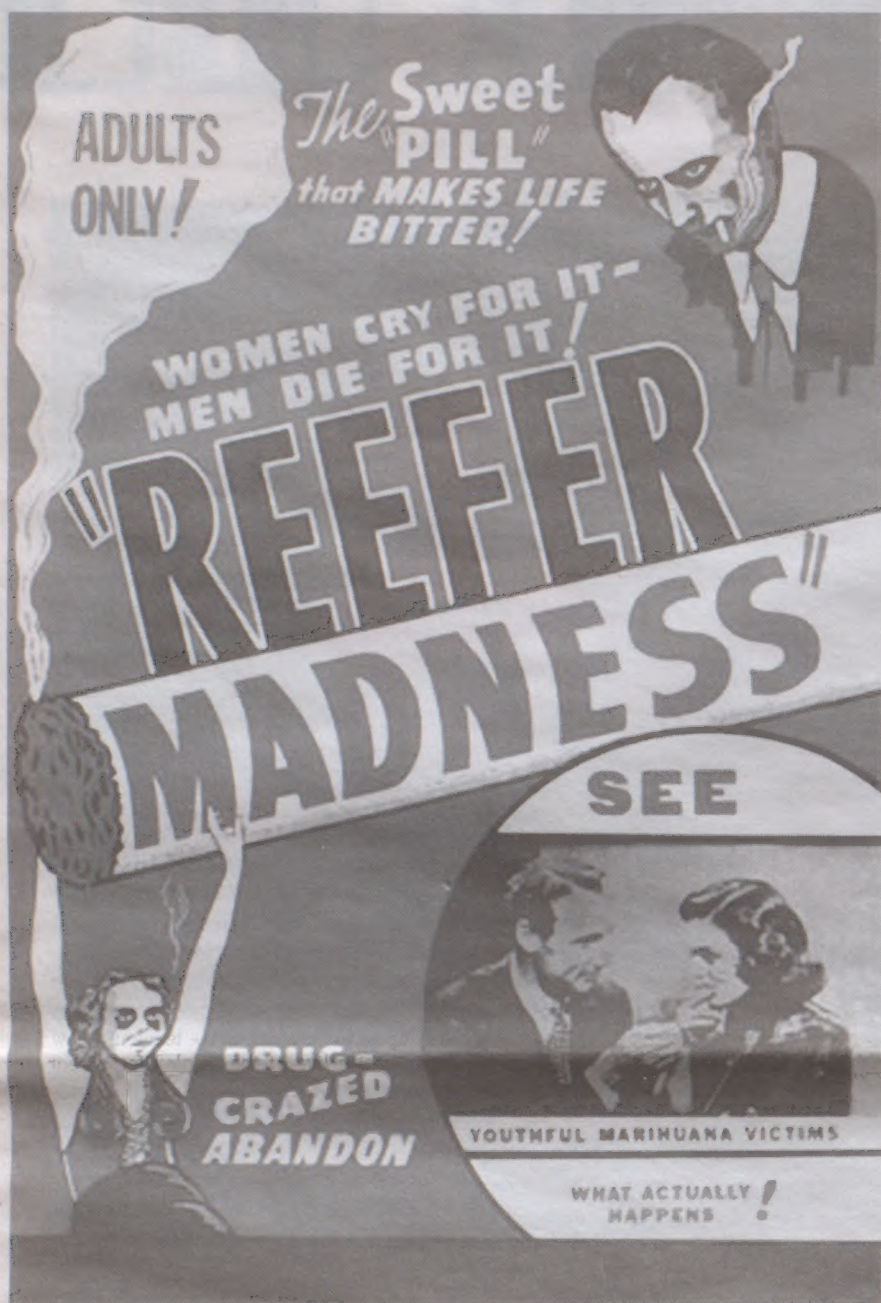
Hohendorff, from Kindred House, said confusion and misunderstanding present a barrier for the transgendered. Because their appearance is confusing as to gender, they are sometimes victimized. "If another client is negative towards the transgendered client, often the transgendered client is the one who is dealt with rather than the abuser," Hohendorff said. "But there are some things people can do right."

Her advice is to treat the person as the gender they present, even if their appearance is confusing. Address the male-to-female transgendered person as "she" rather than "it" because the person views herself as female regardless of appearance. Understand that where they are can be a very isolated place, and they may feel very alone.

"We need to address our own problem with the person not the person as a problem," Hohendorff said.

- Linda Dumont

SCUTTLEBUTT



Reefer Madness

Four thousand years ago there was reference to Cannabis in a Chinese pharmacopoeia. This would suggest that the drug could have been used as much as 1000 years earlier, making cannabis one of the oldest drugs of human use. In China the drug was used primarily as a sedative but became a popular intoxicant in Iran.

Hassan Ibn Sabbah was a famous Islamic cannabis user whose private army were the original Assassins responsible for murder and mayhem in Iran and Syria. The name 'Assassin' may be a corruption of 'Hashishim' or 'Hashish eaters', and it was claimed that the army would become stoned on Hashish to gain courage.

In Europe the plant was called the Indian Hemp Plant and was an important commercial source of fibre and fuel.

In the late 1800's writers like Gautier, Dumas, and Baudelaire wrote about their

hallucinations with hash, possibly after consuming very large quantities of the drug orally. In 1924 the English 'Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopaedia' described the hemp plant, not only as having an intoxicating nature but as having 'valuable medicinal properties'.

More recently a comprehensive report for AADAC was written by U of A professor David Cook. Thoroughly researched and covering topics from the origins of the plant to legal issues, Cook's report describes what happens when someone smokes a joint: "The inhalation route directs the material to the brain by the most direct means, and the drug reaches the brain in only a few seconds after being inhaled. The smoke which contains THC travels to the lungs where it is absorbed, and then the material is carried to the heart via the pulmonary vein. The duration action of the drug depends on the dose, but it is sel-

"No drugs, not even alcohol, causes the fundamental ills of society. If we are looking for the source of our troubles, we shouldn't test people for drugs, we should test them for stupidity, ignorance, greed, and love of power."

P. J. O'Rourke

dom more than a couple of hours".

The debate on whether cannabis is addicting has been going strong for years. There is good evidence that lab animals do not self administer cannabis in contrast to most other drugs of abuse, including nicotine and alcohol. It has also been found that the majority of cannabis users do not frantically look for the drug when they run out, and 'dry' periods are not followed by intense drug-seeking behaviour. Also, the Cook study states: "The drug does not produce significant physical dependence".

The *Vue Weekly Dope Survey*, which ran about five years ago mirrored many of Cook's findings. Of those polled, 77% said they don't crave and often smoke from a few times a week to once a month.

There was consensus on the issue of high-productivity of manual labour and creative work, however, there were comments on increased distraction with increased consumption.

Those polled were divided on the question of whether it is safe to drive while stoned; 45% said yes, 45% said no and 10% said it depends, (like alcohol), on the level of the stone and the experience with the drug. *Vue* pollers were unrepentant on their 'hobby' with 80% saying they never think of quitting and 82% feeling there are more pros than cons to smoking herb.

AADAC Research Officer Gordon Munro has another take on the 'pro/con' situation. "In the 1998 fiscal year, we saw 33,000 clients. Alcohol was number one on the list at 64% and Cannabis was number two at 12%. In our assessment," says Munro, "these people would be classified as low-level dependents. Typically this means a strong psychological connection. There is usually some social interference and some physical manifestation like car accidents. Munro says that the peripheral vision is affected and a person is not able to use side vision as well, not to mention the fact that the driver is probably distracted or preoccupied.

So what about the reports in the news lately regarding the medicinal properties of marijuana. Researchers at the National Institutes of Health found that marijuana

derivatives may prevent brain-cell damage in strokes and slow the growth of breast tumours. Cannabidiol is a powerful antioxidant that prevented the death of brain cells during conditions simulating strokes in lab rats.

"I do the 'High Culture' radio show on CJSR" says Amanda Stewart, "and I've interviewed some of the world's leading health experts on marijuana and cancer therapy and Aids therapy." One of them was Harvard professor Dr Lester Grimsbut. Grimsbut said during one interview with Stewart that "Cannabis is one of the most benign if not the most benign Therapeutically-active substances known to man."

One of three Stewarts, Amanda helps runs the True North Hemp Store and feels strongly about the positive aspects of cannabis. "A huge seven-year lung study at UCLA called the Taskin Study was conducted on three groups," continues Stewart, "One group smoked pot, one smoked cigarettes and one didn't smoke. The people who smoked cigarettes had lung problems, everybody else was fine".

"There has been a hydroponics explosion in the last 5 to 6 years," explains staff sergeant Nik Bok. "We're also seeing a much higher potency content than ever before."

The fact that marijuana is the most popular illegal substance in the world brings certain undesirable elements to the issue. With such popularity comes ambitious entrepreneurs. Sergeant Bok elaborates, "I can tell you quite often when we do a search warrant on a good-sized hydroponic operation there is a good chance we'll see weapons, whether they're rifles, sawed-off shotguns or handguns. It's quite commonplace for high-level dealers." Eighty-eight percent of those polled felt that marijuana should be legalised. Some suggested taxation or controls. "Almost everyone in the legal system associated with processing possession charges, (police, judges, lawyers) understands it is fruitless, unnecessary and expensive. I know, I used to prosecute," wrote one of those polled.

"I don't think it should be legalised," says Munro, "but I think the law has made it into a great evil which it really isn't. My tendency," he continues, "argues from a health promotion point of view".

"There's an ad on NBC right now" laughs Stewart, "where this 15-year-old boy says; 'if I hadn't stopped smoking dope I'd be dead now.' We're saying: who told you that?"

"In 1997, we seized 169,270 kilos with a street value of \$2.5 million," says Sergeant Bok, "We've also had several homicides in the last few years that we're quite certain were drug-related."

Gordon Munro says that the quality of pot is so good it is now being exported at an increasing rate.

If society is trusted with cigarettes, nicotine, codeine, and alcohol for personal control of consumption, why not cannabis? THC certainly is far less habitual than those readily available drugs. As well, legalisation would eliminate the violence surrounding the 'business' of moving the drug. With pot exporting on the rise the federal government could just be looking at a less harmful way to make a profit than on Casinos.

Lastly, the most popular public figure who should smoke a joint: Celine Dion. Comments suggested something about 'needing the munchies'.

-Dale Ladouceur

SCUTTLEBUTT S

SCUTTLEBUTT: blab, gossip, noise, rumor, talk, tattle, whisper

ROGET'S THESAURUS

SCUTTLE

S SCUTTLEBUTT

A drinking fountain on a ship; A cask on a ship used to hold the day's supply of drinking water.

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY



Attack of the Fembots

"The more legal and material hindrances women have broken through, the more strictly and heavily and cruelly images of female beauty have come to weigh upon us. During the past decade, women breached the power structure; meanwhile, eating disorders rose exponentially and cosmetic surgery became the fastest-growing specialty...pornography became the main media category, ahead of legitimate films and records combined, and thirty-three thousand American women told researchers that they would rather lose ten to fifteen pounds than achieve any other goal. More women have more money and power and scope and legal recognition than we have ever had before; but in terms of how we feel about ourselves physically, we may actually be worse off than our unliberated grandmothers."

Naomi Wolf,
The Beauty Myth

At the video store with my 5-year-old niece Lucy, she gravitated, entranced, toward a video and said in a hushed voice, atremble with reverence, I want this.... It was Britney Spears, *Live at Vegas*. Dressed in a skin-tight Elvis suit, she was in her typical I'm soooo hot I have to stand funny - my butt needs air pose. Aw Luce, I said, she's a pin-head and yet I can't wait to show her Marilyn's booty-licious bouncing around to *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend*. Confusion. The video store is a cultural repository. Here are the stories we want told, the gods and goddesses we've voted into legend, the value systems we pay to keep in place. Two thousand years from now, what would be more revealing about us than our video stores? And yet, as much as I agree with Naomi Wolf, there's a nagging sense that women being valued for their appearance was always so and ever shall be. Lucy's parents give her complete freedom with her interests; she loves princesses, unicorns and mermaids, no one told her to. Without knowing who she was, Lucy liked the look of Britney Spears. I told her not to. I feel protective toward my niece. Every time I walk into a Macs and am visually slammed with the endless T&A on the men's magazines, there's a choking sense of 'so this is the new ruling class of women,' the boob-geoisie - we've come so far. And yet, of course, we have. Lucy will never know of the politer, white-bread Taliban that existed only a century ago. She will never be told that education will atrophy her uterus, that if she kept on reading, her reproductive system would collapse and, according to the medical commentary of the day, 'we should have before us a repulsive and useless hybrid.' She will not be pronounced civilly dead upon marriage, remain a legal minor if she doesn't marry, not be able to sign her own Will or have custody of her own children if divorced, own not even the clothes on her back.

These are impossible restrictions to imagine now; women have so many options and are not dependent on marriage to secure material comfort or survival. And yet, a tyranny remains. Women have battled for external freedom and rights and achieved much, but it can be argued that an internal shackle, as debilitating and acute, has replaced it. If *Esquire* magazine profiles a talented woman, no matter what she's achieved, she's invariably posed with her leg's open and her breasts falling out. And she complies with this - why?

The Women's Rights Movement in

America began at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls on July 19th and 20th, 1848. Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized "a convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman." The most valuable achievement would be attaining the vote. Women could then have a say in social reforms so important to them. Abolishing slavery and the humane physical and economic treatment of workers were among the causes of these troublesome hen parties.

The big industrial states of the North were among the last to give in. Oil, manufacturing, and railroad lobbies worked secretly against suffrage, not only because the big liquor interests were threatened by an early alliance of the Women's Christian Temperance Union with the Suffrage cause, but also because the WRM had from the beginning been identified with the labor reform, and "creeping socialism" in general. Women were and still are a cheap labor supply. The vote could have worked against that.

The vote was finally won in 1920, seventy-two years of dedicated campaigning later.

The advent of the two world wars changed the rules. It now became important to society for women to leave their homes and work for the war effort. Advertising in women's magazines jumped on the bandwagon. A Pond's cold cream ad of the time read: 'We like to feel we look feminine even though we are doing a man-sized job...so we tuck flowers and ribbons in our hair and try to keep our faces looking pretty as you please. A cosmetics ad admitted that while the war could not be won by lipstick, "it symbolized one of the reasons why we are fighting...the precious right of women to be feminine and lovely." The propaganda in women's magazines of that day emphasized that it was okay to work in the factory, live on your own and earn your own salary, so long as you stayed "feminine." And, of course, the goal of all women's magazines was to be the sole source on how to be feminine.

After each war, the propaganda in women's magazines took a drastic turn in emphasis. Forces in culture were concerned about finding work for the returning soldiers and fueling the consumer economy. It was important to put pressure on working women to get them back into their homes again, buying household products.

Homemaking standards became a matter of dogmatic inflexibility. Women were to feel competitive, guilty, proud and fulfilled by the material abundance and cleanliness of their

homes. Then the '60s hit, with the subtlety of a sledge hammer.

The Second Wave of feminist activism was fueled by several seemingly independent events of that turbulent decade. President Kennedy convened a Commission on the Status of Women, naming Eleanor Roosevelt as its chair. The report issued by that commission in 1963 documented discrimination against women in virtually every area of American life. State and local governments quickly followed suit and established their own commissions for women, to research conditions and recommend changes that could be initiated. Then, in 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*. She found that many middle-class, educated women felt oppressed and limited in their choices. The book became an immediate bestseller and inspired thousands of women to look for fulfillment beyond the role of homemaker. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was passed, prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, and national origin. Within the commission's first five years, 50,000 sex discrimination complaints were received. It was obvious that the commission didn't think these complaints important, so in 1966 the National Organization for Women was organized.

The college campuses were aflame with the anti-war and civil rights movements but many female students found they were limited to fixing food and running mimeograph machines. They were expected to be brainlessly supportive and keep out of the men's way while they got the job done. Soon, these college women were forming their own women's liberation organizations to redefine their role and status in the changing society.

Movements within movements; so where does that leave us? Has the feminist vision been achieved? We begin to walk away and look for another video, but Lucy looks back wistfully at the amazing bimbo. I know Naomi Wolf is right, women seem to have traded physical oppression for psychological, but we do love being pretty and have (and always will) work for it. Beautiful people, rich people, the haves and have-nots, the exclusive powerful elite that sticks together and is viciously territorial. This goes beyond gender, its everyone for themselves and power is power, man or woman, foul or fair. It's hateful but has anything changed?

- Keyna Laurence



LEBBUTT



Rock Excess

What's the world of rock come to when a former Mouseketeer gets global front page coverage for a playful bisexual kiss from a children's author? So it was Britney Spears and Madonna, who cares? I could understand all the hoopla if the 'I'm just a virgin who dresses and acts like a tramp' poster-girl was caught on tape in a three way with the 'Like a Virgin' queen and say Pamela Anderson. But really who in the world of rock hasn't made a sex video with Canada's sexpot export?

There was a time when serious rock and

rollers really had to go to extremes to get any notoriety at all let alone create a worldwide buzz over a smooch. There are graveyards full of aspiring rock stars (check out the dead rock star club at users.effortress.com/doc_rock/deadrock.html) who fell to earth like Icarus and never came close to the white-hot celebrity status enjoyed by these two. Sure there were a lot of bigwigs like Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Kurt Cobain with a high profile rise and fall with plenty of dirt dished out on the side. But how many kids have strapped on a guitar with stars in

their eyes and visions of hot and cold running groupies in their minds who lit up and burned-out long before reaching their potential? They are legion.

Despite what *Canadian Idol* depicts as a rise to stardom, most aspiring rock gods don't make application videos and get voted for and criticized online. They slug away in dingy basements learning their craft then do whatever it takes to get those important first shows. By the time they make their first measly few hundred bucks they've spent uncountable hours banging away at their instruments pouring out their souls through their amps. While a recent spat of tell-all books like: "The Dirt" by Mötley Crüe and "Kiss and Make Up" by Gene Simmons make the life of a rock star seem like one coke fuelled sex party after another, the reality is much more banal.

For every band that 'makes it' and grasps the golden ring of major label support and air conditioned tour busses there are literally hundreds criss crossing the country in beat-up vans, lucky to get a few beers and make enough gas money to get to the next town. Mike McDonald, former hard drinking front-man for Edmonton's legendary country-punks, Jr. Gone Wild, says he's lived through the moments of his years on the road, but most of the heavy intoxication was an attempt to kill the mind-numbing boredom and depression from long hours trapped in the van at close quarters with your band mates. While he quit drinking years ago and gave up the life of a troubadour to start a family, he still plays music and remembers the night touring and booze nearly cost him his life.

Passed out in the back of the van after downing a handful of pills and a bottle of Southern Comfort, McDonald woke for the umpteenth time wondering where the bottle went. After accusing keyboardist Ford Peir of drinking it one too many times Peir grabbed him, opened the back doors and dangled his head over the open road while half the van yelled 'Throw him out' and the rest drove on in blissful ignorance. While there's definitely drama to be found chasing the dragon of fame there's precious little glamour-unless your name is Britney.

- Phil Duperron

Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue with that; I'm right and I will be proved right. We're more popular than Jesus now; I don't know which will go first—rock and roll or Christianity.

- John Lennon

SCUTTLEBUTT **S**

Like the office watercooler the shipboard water barrel—the **scuttlebutt**—was a source of gossip. The **scuttlebutt** is literally "the latest rumor." The literal sense is Standard, as is its figurative sense in all but Formal and Oratorical uses.

KENNETH G. WILSON



VOICE <11>

SCUTTLEBUTT



S SCUTTLEBUTT

SCUTTLEBUTT: To engage in or spread gossip: blab, gossip, noise, rumor, talk, tattle, whisper.

ROGET'S THESAURUS

Gays Kissing Gays

We are getting to see a lot of guys kissing on TV these days. The corporate media wants to make sure that we realize same-sex marriage means sex. The issue has set young people against old, east against west, and increased the polarization of darn near every dichotomy in Canadian society. To me it is all a smoke screen. People always have and always will stick their things in other people or let other people stick their things in them, married or not. It affords people an endless opportunity to criticize others for different tastes but in the end doesn't change things very much. Marriage is different. Marriage is about money and property. It always has been.

The old saw was that it was as cheap for two to live together as it was for one. That is not entirely true but it is substantially less expensive if you can share the cost of things like rent and utilities with another. Neither sex nor marriage is necessary to accomplish this economy, just compatible personality disorders. When you get into marriage itself there are substantial monetary benefits both direct and indirect. Credit for large purchases such as houses is easier for couples, there are reciprocal health insurance plans that cover spouses, there are tax breaks.

At one point, when wives stayed home and raised children, there was some rationale for this. It subsidized the unpaid labour of the wife at home and supported those who performed the service of raising children for the community. In those days, the fact that this was done via the man's salary and benefit plan made sense both because he was the interface with the economy and because his wife and children were considered his property.

Things have changed. Most married couples now both work, even if there are children. Neither women nor men like that ownership concept anymore. Families now do not only contain a man, a woman, and X number of offspring. Families can be single parent or double parent of any sex. The children can be biological or adopted. The defenders of same-sex marriage point this out. This does not have anything to do with marriage however. It is possible to be a par-

ent without being married.

And there is the rub. All the monetary advantages of marriage are not available to the unmarried, whether they are parents or not. Same-sex couples would like some of these advantages. Who can blame them? The real losers in this juggling of perks and advantages are the singles. Especially single parents.

Single people pay through the nose for shelter, transportation, health care and taxes. The situation that made it fair to give people raising children these advantages has changed, but married people are still getting the perks anyway. I think people should only be considered married in law and eligible for all those marital benefits only after they produce or adopt a child and only remain eligible if they take care of this child or children in an acceptable manner. That would level the playing field completely, and single people living together and sharing accommodation with the benefit of a marriage licence would have no more advantage than other singles living together without a marriage licence. Meanwhile, those devoting energy to raising a child or children, not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of the community as a whole would be subsidized and valued for this service. (If you do not believe that this service is a benefit for the whole community, you should see the tax deductions on the paycheques of my three single, single-parent raised children!)

Gays kissing guys on television is just an appeal to heterosexual prejudice. It makes some people squirm to think of what else they may be doing. The real discrimination in our society is not against same-sex couples, but against single people. Single parents, the vast majority of whom are women are hit with a double-whammy. They have all the expenses of a family and none of the breaks. This is the group whose needs really need to be addressed in law. I definitely think we need to change the definition of marriage. Lets get rid of the perks for all those D.I.N.K.s (double income, no kids) of whatever sex and focus on rewarding good parenting, however it is accomplished.

-Theresa McBryan

NYC 101

It's the unspoken but widely sought-after dream, that secret craving we've all had to hear our voice echo across Madison Square Garden as the crowd goes wild, the stage pulsates from the bass guitar and our fists clench tightly around the metallic high-stand microphone... You wannabe a rock star but you're not quite sure how to go about it.

Personally, I have no secret tips for nailing a record contract, nor do I carry any weight whatsoever in the music industry. Truth being told, I've only found enough courage to employ my own chords for Karaoke once. And that was with a group of friends after my blood alcohol level shot to unprecedented levels. So what could I possibly have to offer you in terms of advice? Well, for the next year-and-a-half I'll be living in one of the birth cities of rock & roll: New York City.

I figure that if you truly want to be a full-fledged rock & roller you must already have a basic roadmap ready to follow (and if you're not sure whether you actually have talent simply apply for the next edition of Canadian Idol and someone will no doubt tell you). Moreover, your level of talent and ambition has little to do with where you begin to build a career in the spotlight. I'm not talking about impressing the big-wigs or winning the Grammy club circuit. It's the little things you have to experience and learn first. Welcome to NYC 101: a crash course in the everyday details that people often miss in their mad dash to the limelight.

The Essentialist's Rules For Living in The Big Apple:

* Autobiographical (and often embarrassing) events that I experienced.

** An event I witnessed but had to share

10. * Continue to clean away terrorism by purchasing the Osama Bin Laden roll of toilet paper, available in gift shops off Wall Street. With his photo on every square and the words "Wipe Away Terrorism" scripted below, the only thing topping this not-so-controversial keepsake is something a little more current: the "unofficial" Saddam Hussein toilet paper roll. It reads "Wipe Your Crack With The Guy From Iraq."

9. * Upon leaving LaGuardia Airport and entering your home near Harlem, best you not turn back immediately-even if you think you hear gunshots. Despite what's shown in most episodes of "Cops," not all of Harlem is a ghetto. Who knows, it could really just be a broken fire hydrant from where children are quite safely playing.

8. * Learn the Manhattan subway routes. Edmonton's transit system is the equivalent to the Purple 7 express train running between Times Square and Grand Central Station; in Manhattan there's also the Red 1, 2, 3, and 9 lines, the Blue A, C, and E lines, the Orange B, D, F, and V lines, the Green 4, 5, and 6 lines, the Yellow N, R, Q, and W lines, and the Brown J, M and Z

lines. Oh, and there's four more boroughs to navigate through in addition to Manhattan.

7. * Meet others. The best way to get to know your non-English speaking, international student, female roommate is by killing the 4-inch, flying cockroach-like insect that is keeping her up screaming at 2:00am. 1 friend down, 15 million to go...

6. * After shelling out \$5 US to do your laundry it's best not to walk over a foul-smelling manhole. In fact, just stay clear of manholes altogether, as your sandals are likely to become stuck to the steamy garbage odors that spray and solidify around the holes.

5. ** Carrying a street map, a flashlight, and walking down a dark alley will only invite pick-pocketers. Be prepared to cry, after which you will cancel all credit cards and curse every person in this city.

4. * Understand that your hair may not be washed in less than 15 minutes, especially if the taps are located on the bathroom wall in the middle of the tub and the hot water tap falls off every time you turn it. There is, however, a great warning sign the roommates will put up in order to deter you from false hopes: "Hold for a count of five, then paper and waste will go for a dive. Bathroom has low water pressure."

3. * If you plan to become an NYU student (specifically within the student body), and reside in Canada, you can do everything online: apply for school and scholarships, book your airline ticket, find and lease an apartment, and register for your classes. The only thing you have to do is show up.

2. * To practice keeping your eyes open so that you can both window shop and admire the architectural playground of NYC always look directly into someone's eyes on the subway and smile. This way, he or she will stare you down until one of you starts a conversation. Or, on the rare occasion, his/her agitated reaction will give every other passenger something to look at (instead of awkwardly at the floor). Kudos to you for being an "interactionist"

1. * When you're depressed, lonely and tired of living your dream as a wannabe rock & roller, Times Square will no doubt cure you by one of two ways:

(a) Giving you financial direction thanks to their mesmerizing five-story billboard which reads: "Liberate Your Money."

(b) Or by allowing you to liberate your money by visiting the two-story "Original Hershey Automatic Gravitational Chocolate Machine."

Who knows how far you'll make it before you call it quits and return to Edmonton. The only guarantee I can give you is that regardless of the turnout the journey to stardom must be worth it, for I'm still here and I don't plan on leaving anytime soon...

- Neil Parmar

SUBVERSES

WAKE UP

She wakes up
every morning she
wishing she wouldn't.

She goes to the
street house. They
wishing she wouldn't.

She has coffee,
lights a smoke.
She's a unit broke
wishing she wasn't

They pitch for a smoke
not much more spoke.
Care she does not evoke
for those are broke

Ones they violate
seem not to rate
Some merely tolerate
the fight for the plate

Hurt she know deep
tears she did weep
hers not alone the steep
of that ugliness seep

One pitted by another
brother 'gainst brother.
A sister to gather
while others slept.

The tip of the berg
the edge of the verge
now they awake.
Alarm is spoke

She wakes up,
every morning she
wishes she wouldn't

Have to fend for
the one that is broke,
the one without
the plate hand out

- Louise Hellver
"Lady"

MOTHER NATURE IS DRUNK

Mother Nature's drunk
Mother Nature's drunk
She's that first waft of whiskey on a Friday
and she's pourin' those molten lava lamp legs
over that cosmic bar stool and givin' me that
"c'mover ere, boy" look.

Mother Nature's drunk
Mother Nature's drunk
and I'm gettin' laid
She's bridgin' a stick of stars
and shootin' that cue-ball moon
into the corner pocket of a petroleum night.
She's traipsin' around, liftin' her skirt,
flirtin' with God and mixin' it up with Father time
She's throwin' stars like they was dice
yellin' momma needs a new galaxy, c'mon!
And she's drawin' heavy from a sugar spoon of celestial Absinthe,
stumblin' around and smashin' that phosphorescent bottle
on the glass cage of the night sky screamin' Get it out!! GET IT OUT!!!

Mother Nature's drunk
Mother Nature's drunk
She's mouthin' flirtatious slander
and I take it in, swish it with a double gin
and get it in, baby!! GET IT IN!!
She's rollin' a party gagger bigger than time itself,
and spittin' from that big crow's nest in the sky -
spewin' Wagner and White Album outtakes
and we're makin' out in the backseat of a 59 Stratocaster
doin' a few lines of stardust

and wet like a stormy beach
screamin, Do me, baby! Watch the sky breach!
And her aurora is pourin'
spillin' from her mouth into mine,
and she's freezin' my spine
paralyze me baby!
Cause after her I don't wanna move,
just slip into somethin' smooth.....

Mother Nature's drunk
Mother Nature's drunk
so check your pockets for rockets rockets rockets
and light sockets
cause I'm pluggin' in.
I'm trippin' out, wigglin' out, and spinnin' out
to her transistor my trance sister
my plant kisser, my summer lawn hisser
2-way radio
Yeah, she eclipses me and I'll peruse her
she's a guitar pick floating in a double gin
the tender of the pin, my mistress of spin

And it's all about the cosmic rugby scrum,
the uncertainty principal and dubble bubble gum
And it's all about the Big Bang, ethereal pangs,
the 64 2 Mustang,
and HYDROGEN HYDROGEN HYDROGEN
It's all about natural selection, rigged elections,
and a rhino's erection.

Mother Nature's drunk
Mother Nature's drunk
And this is more than love and lust combined,
it's a goddamned stellar quotient;
the longest answer to the oldest question.....

Why is she so visually potent?

Mother Nature's drunk
Mother Nature's drunk
and I'm gettin' laid

- Mike Gravel, 2002

HOPE

I hope and pray that one day we will all
put aside our differences (colour, race,
religion), and be as our creator intended
us to be.

Loving, kind, courteous, equal to
one another.

I hope and pray that we will all one day
go to and meet in a place called heaven.

I hope and pray that we will have com-
passion for one another, whether we
think we are first class, middle class
or third class

I hope that one day we will all realize we
are all the same, we are human, we have
feelings, we have a heart, we have skin,
bones, and blood.

I hope and pray there will be no more
homeless or suffering, and no pain, just
loving kindness, peace, and prosperity
among us all.

This is my Hope, not just for me, my fam-
ily, and friends; but for all humanity on
this beautiful planet called earth

For all our relations infinite love

SUBVERSES S

Intended or serving to
subvert, especially
intended to overthrow or
undermine an established
government:

"Sex and creativity are
often seen by dictators
as subversive activities"

ERICA JONG

THE WOMAN

There is a woman who smokes word
Slow mellow ganja tunes that
Makes you think of sex and wet beaches
And the cold winters of disappointment

Jazz Diaspora of the relationship profiling
Is black and white key turning balls a-
churning unlock

The whiskey bird cause she's free and
warbling freedom and beauty
Tonight. The birds environmental Though

A whole tree was there in my pants
And woody the woodpecker was
nowhere to relieve it
So I walk into the John
And her brother walks in

And he, like I, can't believe she read the
sexxxx poem

And I was red in the face
Trying to hide my Cuban missile crisis
With my hand the effect of her poem
I know where my balls are in my pocket.

-Philip Jagger

FIBRE, FACTS & FALLACIES

R RHUBARB

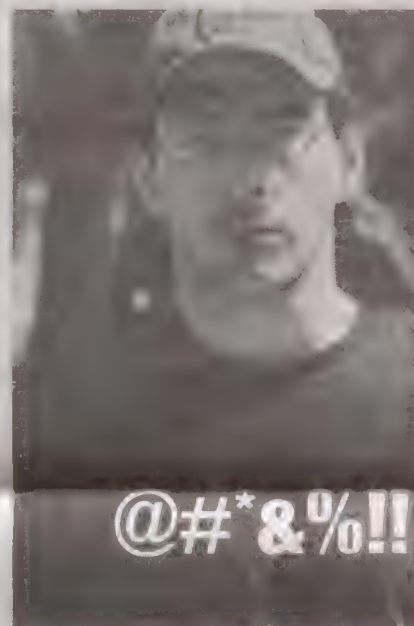
I see now our fireside formed into a groupe, no one member of which has a **fibre** in their composition which can ever produce any jarring or jealousies among us. No irregular passions, no dangerous bias, which may render problematical the future fortunes and happiness of our descendants.

THOMAS JEFFERSON



Our Vice

Timed-Out 3.0



are developing the finest W.M.D. on the planet and for once he'd be right

Because every morning the alarm goes off, every time I'm late for an appointment, I swear it's because of that damn clock and the chowder heads that invented the freakin' thing.

Using a mechanical device to keep track of time is probably one of man's maddest attempts at feeling secure. What drives home this point is the amount of stress the device causes. I mean really, scheduling your day-to-day life (which has the general consistency of crunchy peanut butter) around something that never stops moving is tantamount to riding a tricycle in heavy traffic... sooner than later you're going to get your stressed out ass run over.

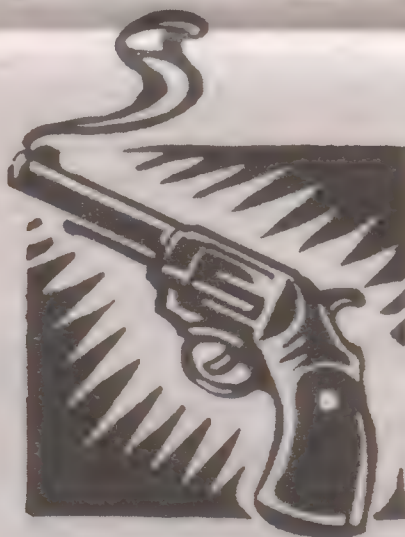
I'm sure that the instant that man really understands the complexity of temporal mechanics he'll try to find a way to buy himself some more time or turn back the clock. Even though we're a slave to time I think every now and then we get tired of Father Time tapdancing on our groin region and we decide to stop the clock or at the very least stomp the crap out of it so it slows down like the long drawn out death rattle of a man dying of terminal flatulence.

So...if you're tired of running in that hamster wheel of time here's a piece of advice.

Stop.

Kick back. Smell the roses. Don't think about where you should be, what you have to do and when you have to have it done. Everything will be where you put it and the world isn't gonna end. Put Father Time where he should be...working for you. Because in the end you've got nothing but time. Especially if you just murdered your alarm clock.

- Bruce (@#*&%!!) Fox



One Shot Meal

Inexpensive meals that can be made in one pot or pan

Quesadilla Ranchero

Quesadillas are great for clearing out your fridge while simultaneously impressing your friends. They are equally good for a meal or a snack. Tortillas come in many different colours and flavours now, so play around with the many different choices available. Simply put a large tortilla in a large pan on medium heat, turn the tortilla over when it has warmed-up, then sprinkle on the cheeses, cooked meats and vegetables of your choosing. Heat as many pans as you think you can keep your eye on. Allow the cheese to melt and it's ready. Fold in half, cut into 3 or 4 pieces and serve with a dollop of salsa, sour cream and/or guacamole on each piece.

The recipes below are examples of how to use ingredients you already have. Almost any meat (especially leftover bbq), cheese or cooked/roasted veg-

etables will work, but remember that if a vegetable will release moisture while cooking, make sure this happens before it goes into a quesadilla or you will have a big, sticky mess on your hands, and your shirt.

These combinations work nicely:

- ▶ Hamburger, feta cheese, roasted garlic and spinach (blanched, steamed or deep-fried)
- ▶ Chicken, white cheddar, sautéed onions and red, yellow and/or green bell peppers
- ▶ Shrimp, chipotle peppers(smoked jalapeño), goat cheese, cilantro and seeded, roasted tomatoes
- ▶ Sautéed mushrooms, broccoli, roasted fennel, avocado, fresh herbs, cumin and Monterey Jack cheese

Try your own combinations, clean out your fridge, be a hero for the next sports event viewed at your house. Hockey season is upon us. Ole!

- Warren Bjamason

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EDMONTON

Landlord and Tenant Advisory Board

Call 496-5959



Call if you are a landlord or a tenant that needs:

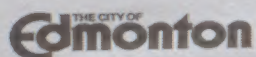
- Advice in residential tenancy matters
- Mediation in a residential tenancy dispute
- Education courses or workshops
- To purchase the Question & Answer Booklet or Forms
- Free Landlord and Tenant fact sheets

Some topics on the information line include:

- General Information
- Laws and Tips
- Security Deposits
- Starting a Tenancy
- Agreements
- Inspection Reports & Security Deposits
- Resolving Disputes
- Notices

Find information fast using
The Landlord and Tenant Information
Line 24 hours a day. Call 496-5959; press
2, then press 1 and
follow the instructions.

City of Edmonton, Landlord and Tenant Advisory Board
Main Floor Chancery Hall
#3 Sir Winston Churchill Square
(Corner of 102A Avenue and 99 Street)
Edmonton, AB T5J 2C3



RBC Dominion Securities

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EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

For the Inner City

- ▶ Casual Labour
- ▶ Life Management Skills Training
- ▶ Career Counseling
- ▶ Résumé & Cover Letter Preparation
- ▶ Job Interview Skills
- ▶ Internet Training
- ▶ H2S Training (limited funding available)
- ▶ WHMIS/Standard First Aid Training

All services offered at no cost!

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"Pay the worker -
NOT the broker"

Minimum hourly rate - \$8.00
Minimum 4 hours per day

Workers available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day
Bookings taken within work hours
Mon-Thurs: 7am-2pm
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Need someone to help with...

- ▶ Yard Work/Snow Removal
- ▶ Loading/Unloading
- ▶ Decorating - internal/external
- ▶ Cleaning - domestic/industrial
- ▶ Manufacturing
- ▶ General Labour

All services offered at no cost!

BISSELL CENTRE

Telephone: 424-4385
Or

Casual Labour program for women at
Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton

Telephone: 421-1175 ext 22
Mon-Fri 7pm-3pm

Performers Wanted!

Family Entertainment Night (Coffee House)

Open Stage! Live Music!
Light Supper! Poetry Reading!

DOOR PRIZES!!

Tuesday, October 16th

Supper 6 PM
Music at 7 PM

Bissell Centre

10527 - 96 St.
Contact: Earl @ 423-2285 ext. 144

Renovations Complete at City Centre

Big changes have occurred at the City Center Alberta Service Centre. Over the last few months services have moved, offices have been painted and a new Labour Market Information Center opened to provide the community with a variety of career and employment services along with financial and support services.

It's more than just a fresh coat of paint, today; the province's busiest Alberta Human Resources and Employment delivery site provides all services in one convenient location right here in the community. City Centre is a place where you can go to apply for financial and employment assistance, and find up to date information about today's labour market. It's a place to help you find and keep a job.

For more information Click, Call or Come into:
City Centre Alberta Service Centre
10232 -105th Street
Phone: (780) 415-4900
TDY (Deaf Relay): 422-0790
www.gov.ab.ca/hre



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If you missed our Songs of the Street fundraiser on September 12/2003 at the Stanley L. Milner Library, you may be some sort of social outcast. Don't miss the next one or people will talk. Aside from the musicians, poets, dancers, gourmet appetizers, excellent art displays, and libations; it was a great community event you will not find elsewhere. We at **Our Voice** would like to thank all the talented performers and volunteers that made the evening possible.



**Our Voice
vendors are
now equipped
with stylish
Our Voice
T-Shirts.**

**Dress to
impress with
Our Voice.**

OUR VOICE

VENDOR REPUBLIC

Vendor of the Month



Michelle Semple

Our Voice veteran vendor Michelle Semple may be partially blind, but don't kid yourself, like she has eyes in the back of her head, when trouble's about to start. She can take care of herself and always does her best in avoiding any threatening signs of danger. She says, "When I'm walking down the street, sometimes the odd person or street people, try to give me a hard time. I just try to walk away. I try to ignore them the best I can."

Michelle's been partially blind since birth. When she was 5 years old, her single biological mother gave her up to a foster home environment. Michelle has managed to keep her head above the surface throughout the time she's remained in foster care from ages 5 to 21.

When Michelle was 17, she decided on applying for a disability pension and because of her handicap, successfully qualified for (A.I.S.H.) Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped.

When she reached age 21, she decided that it was time to go out into the real world to live independently. Despite her handicap, at age 18, she managed to work as a volunteer, serving food to patients at a hospital in Edmonton, for a 1-year period.

At age 21, she had come to the realization that being partially blind was becoming a struggle and that going into the real world finding a real job wasn't going to become a reality, so she remained unemployed and dependent on (A.I.S.H.).

Soon in 1996, life would eventually turn around for Michelle Semple. Her friend Ray Randle a former *Our Voice* vendor, who now sells Calgary Street Talk newspaper in Calgary, referred Michelle to sell papers for *Our Voice* magazine in May of 1996.

Michelle realized that with her natural abilities in getting along with people in everyday life, *Our Voice* vending was the right kind of job for someone with a handicap. She's been selling ever since.

She vends to essentially supplement her (A.I.S.H.) income. The money that she earns from vending pays for her bills and food expenses.

Michelle also has a life like others when not vending *Our Voice* magazine. She enjoys knitting, bowling and oh yes, she also enjoys a swim in the public pool, another challenge worth looking forward to.

When a passer-by occasionally tells Michelle to get a real job, she always has an answer that puts them in their place. She says, "I say, well this is a job. We vendors pay for our papers. We have a right to make money, just like everybody else. So it's actually a job we're doing here."

Michelle is obviously a team player, and to this day, continues to impact (Team *Our Voice*) in a positive way. She certainly has the magazine's vote as *Our Voice* Vendor of the Month. Keep up the great work Michelle and keep the *Our Voice* circle strong.

- John Zapantis

In Remembrance of Herb Jamieson

Edmonton, especially the inner-city, lost a valuable and selfless community member on September 16, 2003 when Herb Jamieson passed away at the age of 90. Herb was born on April 19th, 1912 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. He spent most of his life in active community service and was the proprietor of a hardware store in west Edmonton for many years. He was a member of the Alberta Legislative Assembly from 1959-1963 and a member of the Edmonton Public School Board from 1971-1983. He was a member of the Hope Mission board for over 50 years which runs the homeless men's hostel named in his honour: The Herb Jamieson Centre. In his later years, he became an honorary life-time member. He had positions on many other boards and committees such as the Alberta School Trustees Association, Beulah Home, The Gideons' and numerous others during his life of public service. Herb Jamieson will be sorely missed as an integral component of the spirit of helping and giving in the inner-city that his memory will continue to embody.

People's Columnist



Helping Newcomers

Often war refugees and immigrants coming to a strange country have no way of knowing what their futures will bring, after escaping the entrapment of their war-torn countries.

Life can be a confusing journey for immigrants who especially lack the communication skills for a very demanding job market in Canada.

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (E.M.C.N.) is one unique centre that inevitably has that key in opening those doors to hope and prosperity for refugees and immigrants looking for an education that will one day determine the type of employment opportunities that await expectations.

The idea for the centre was originally proposed as an idea by a nurse named Anne Falk who learned how to speak Vietnamese while living in that country.

When she arrived back to Edmonton from Vietnam in 1980, she witnessed the first Vietnamese refugees arriving from war-torn Vietnam. She feared that these refugees, wouldn't be able to integrate into the Canadian lifestyle. So as an alternative, she convinced Mennonite churches in Edmonton on the idea of forming an alliance, in establishing a centre in offering free job training and academic upgrading for possible career opportunities, for refugees of war-torn countries such as Vietnam.

A year later in May of 1981, the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (E.M.C.N.) was established in Edmonton.

The E.M.C.N. offers over 35 free-of-charge and government-funded programs and services to low-income refugees and immigrants. The programs and services operate under three departments: Community Services, Employment and English as a Second Language.

The centre for the year 2003 has received refugees and immigrants from over 100 countries. These countries include: Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Congo and other third world countries.

The centre offers other popular programs and services that range from free tutoring for immigrant students attending elementary, junior high, high schools and university. English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) serves immigrants experiencing communication barriers, while trying to integrate into a Canadian lifestyle. These are just some of over 35 programs and services offered to newcomers.

Jim Gurnett is the executive director of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. I spoke to Jim in a recent interview with *Our Voice*; he elaborated on some of the tough social obstacles immigrants and refugees face when first arriving to a strange country. He says, "Well this is probably the biggest single issue for immigrants from other parts of the

world, coming to Canada is that a lot of them are very highly educated. The kind of educated arrivals that come here range from doctors to librarians, from teachers to even engineers. When they come to Canada, their training and their credentials aren't recognized here. They often end up working very low-paying jobs and are hardly able to support their families. So we try to develop programs to help them to get employment that's in their field of work."

The helpful centre for immigrants also works in conjunction with various schools, colleges, technical schools and universities. The E.M.C.N. has successfully championed the cause to help its students find employment in a prosperous job market.

Jim Gurnett says, "Probably the best example is a program called 'The Engineers Integration Program.' What it does is, we work in cooperation with the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (N.A.I.T.) Our immigrant students take a ten month course with us. Then we help them find jobs as engineering technologists. So what we found out is that over the several years, that we ran that the program, the person who finishes the program, their income increases by about two-and-a-half times, when they're done the program. They might begin with a low-paying job, that's bringing-in maybe \$18,000 or \$20,000 dollars. When they're finished the program, we are often able to help them find jobs, that pay in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000 dollars a year. So they can really have a better quality of family life."

One of the more significant programs offered from over 35 programs offered at the centre is the Securing Hopeful Futures Program. It's a diverse and helpful program that offers interesting courses and activities to its teenaged immigrant students.

Ayen Alith age 38 is a Sudanese war refugee, who came to Canada 4 years ago from Kenya, Africa, after fleeing from her country in Sudan. She fled the civil war in Sudan to establish a more healthy and safer lifestyle for her husband and 6 children. She's currently taking the English as a Second Language Program at Alberta College. When she completes the program with her prior experience in working in the medical field, she hopes to find employment as a nurse. Ayen's program is covered through a student loan.

Some of her 6 children are taking the Securing Hopeful Futures Program, as well as the English as a Second Language Program at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. One of her older son's, whose name she would prefer to not use, is taking the Securing Hopeful Futures Program. The program offers a broad range of computer, English language courses and activities. She's content with the new opportunities the E.M.C.N. has offered her children. She says, "The Centre has really helped a lot, because my kids keep busy. They take my kids on field trips. They show them some different culture. So that has helped my kids a lot and it has helped me understand culture here in Canada. I see how my kids get along with other kids at this centre. I like that so much, because it keeps my kids out of trouble. This program here helps my kids a lot."

Twenty-three years ago, places like the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers was not a reality for refugees and immigrants struggling to build a prosperous and healthy lifestyle. Thanks to the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, many immigrants who have come here for help, are today's successful working Canadians. This gives them every reason to believe that E.M.C.N. is always there to open a door for future for immigrants and refugees.

- John Zapantis

REPUBLIC R

No republic is more real than that of letters, and I am the last in principles, as I am the least in pretensions to any dictatorship in it.

THOMAS JEFFERSON



S SOOTHSAYER

Soothsayer. Beware the
Ides of March. Caesar.
He is a dreamer. Let us
leave him. Pass.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



LIBRA (September 23rd - October 22nd)
Drinking till besotted at the York, then buying off-
sales and walking home through the park in the
dark would certainly qualify as taking "unusually
high risks in your efforts to find thrills". If you
were born from October 19th to the 23rd, this
whole year could be a barrel of monkeys for you
but you must take care to avoid unreasonable
risks.

SCORPIO (October 23rd - November 21st)
This is a good month to take care of yourself. The
sun is in your solar Twelfth House so direct your
attention to satisfying your own needs before
anyone or anything else. It's not selfishness when
you're recharging yourself for service to others
throughout the rest of the year.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22nd - December 21st)
Horary astrology's principles are applied in
reverse from those of electional astrology but
because you might not want to use that challeng-
ing word again, Sandy will just refer to electional
astrology. Electional astrology is rather complex
but one of the shortcuts to selecting an appropri-
ate time to begin working towards a desired out-
come is to watch the lunar cycle. Any activity
that you want to grow or expand should be
undertaken during a waxing moon, and vice
versa. For example, if you want to slow the
growth of your toenails, cut them during a wan-
ing moon. How do you distinguish between wax-
ing and waning? If the moon is illuminated on
the left, it's waxing. (Lunar cycle mnemonic #1:
Both "left" and "wane" have an "e" in the word.)

CAPRICORN (December 22nd - January 19th)
Sometime this month you will have occasion to
choose between a practical and a frivolous
expense. You will also have the chance to meet a
stranger. The likelihood of such a chance being
consummated will be determined by the strength
of your mind's hold on your heart. Oh, and you
will be solicited for a worthy cause and you will
win the lottery, but Sandy isn't sure what will
come first (should it matter?). In the event of a
discrepancy between your future experience and
the prediction of that future contained herein,
your experience shall be taken as correct.

AQUARIUS (January 20th - February 18th)
The momentum that you bring into new initia-
tives will be diminished if you forget to properly
wrap up old business. For example, the move
from the woodshed to the stage won't happen as
quickly as you might prefer if you fail to lay a
solid foundation of everything you'll need as a
gigging magician. It might make you famous but
you'll really only be able to really saw one assis-
tant in half before your career momentum is
diminished. While it's considered bad form to ask
a fellow inmate what his crime was, it's bound to
come out and then you're likely to have some
sweaty fellow force you to reveal your secrets of
legerdemain.

PISCES (February 19th - March 20th)
"Abstract, intuitive, and quick in understanding".
Those are some mental key words for you Pisces.
Given your environmental sensitivity and your
lack of confidence it's no surprise that the gossip
talkin' blues are far from just about the only
blues you wallow in. Take heart. If you follow St.
Brendan's way you won't have to bleed a little
while tonight as you write a letter from Bilbao.
You've a good head on your shoulders. You can
outwit the salesmen, cheats and liars in the com-

petition for the hand of Magdalena. Then, like
the pair of subversives you are, you can both kick
back and watch everything coming up rosy and
grey.

ARIES (March 21st - April 19th)
You still need to allow yourself time to recover
from the intense pressures you've been under.
Recharging your soul will be made easier by lis-
tening to your inner self. "Meditation and spiritu-
al practices are key to plumbing your vast spiritu-
al nature." Whatever practice you choose, just
make sure that it's meaningful to you.

TAURUS (April 20th - May 20th)
If you're seeking a practical, productive outlet in
your deliberate and determined fashion try ask-
ing your partner what stroke they would prefer
and then use a scented massage oil. Instead of
Audioslave, ask your partner what she or he
would like to listen to for a change (Esquivel per-
haps?). Rub cocoa leaves on your gums so you
can talk all night about what brings you together.

GEMINI (May 21st - June 20th)
Remember that person who caught your eye at
the Jayhawks' show? The one hot enough to
spontaneously combust your pocketed chronic
pastime? The one who casually subdued your
drunken lust ache with a lick and a promise that
slid that swell feeling up through the pit of your
stomach, growing and glowing its way to your
heart? Well, forget it; it's going nowhere. Besides,
while last month may have soured you on close
relationships, there is still a chance of salvaging
that really important one you thought was
fubared.

CANCER (June 21st - July 22nd)
You've seen friends suffer through various
lifestyle liabilities (and you've endured your own
share as well). Now you want to help others deal
with the pain. Your natural inclination toward
healing and nurturing makes you a good candi-
date for training as a counselor. Being a cardinal
sign, it wouldn't be unprecedented for you to initi-
ate a career change Cancer. Try to get a parking
spot with an outlet though.

LEO (July 23rd - August 22nd)
Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll wrinkled you prema-
turely, inside and out. Nowadays, it's not that you
care any less for that philosophy but you do
notice the incongruity more. Like that recent rare
outing during which you flashbulbed between
lucidity and blue ruin. The kaleidoscoped memo-
ries have compressed into one haunting vision of
you falling out of your chair with laughter after
you asked your partner to dance and were told
"you're so pissed, you can't even find your drink."
Holding your belly, wheezing something about
paraphrasing Ron Hawkins... Your youthful
habits no longer become you. Did they ever?

VIRGO (August 23rd - September 22nd)
Your affirmation for the month is "wonderful
opportunities surround me" so let "the sweet joy
of companionship deepen to love". Try not to use
nouns as verbs; it makes you sound stupid. If you
want to have fun with words try "ultracrepidari-
anism" (the habit of giving opinions and advice
on matters outside of one's knowledge) and
"moromancy" (foolish divination). And yes, if you
wish you may use these in reference to Sandy's
soothsaying. After all, to paraphrase the Glimmer
Twins, "it's only horoscopy..."

